Sealift

MAGAZINE OF THE MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

October 1979

THE FUTURE — DEMANDING

"Everyone needs his memories. They keep the wolf of insignificance from the door."

That quotation from Nobel prize winning author Saul Bellow has special meaning for Military Sealift Command members—those aboard when the command was established in October 1949 and those who are part of MSC today. Memories are important to both.

In this issue of Sealift, some of the highlights of the 1950s, the 60s and 70s are "remembered" in photos and words.

A single photo may well be worth a few thousand words and each issue of Sealift magazine probably contains 20,000 or more words. No matter what is written and what has been captured by a photographer, both combined cannot really tell the story of 30 years of MSC operations.

From its early role in the Berlin Airlift to later support of conflicts in Korea and Southeast Asia, from its evacuation of refugees from a Europe in turmoil in the 1950s to the lifting of nearly 180,000 other refugees fleeing an advancing enemy in South Vietnam in this decade, MSC has been conspicuous because its people and ships generally have been where the action was.

If history does indeed repeat itself, the future which we who are still a part of MSC must cope with is going to be very rewarding, and very exciting. It will be exciting because it will levy great demands on our abilities, tax our creativity, test our judgment and make us prove our dedication to the missions we serve.

The future will be rewarding because efforts we make and the actions we complete contribute to our national security and to the well-being of the American public. And the thanks reflected in the faces of those who are saved from perils at

sea, the hostility of fellow man, or the sometimes deadly forces of nature itself are probably the most satisfying expression of gratitude that anyone can ever earn.

There is little I can add to the accounts of history contained in this issue of Sealift. However, I would be remiss if I did not take advantage of the opportunity our 30th anniversary brings to express my high regard to all those who have served with MSC before me, and those who now play important roles on the command team.

The wolf of insignificance can hardly dilute the thrill of past adventures, the compassion and the brotherhood often typified by MSC actions, and the individual satisfactions that constantly remind us that we have played an important role in the writing of United States history. Collective memories sustain our pride in what has gone before and provide a reservoir of experience and knowledge we can rely on whenever we need to renew our strength.

As the eleventh MSC commander, I know that I am following in the footsteps of those who have been a part of history. In many crises, they and the professionals who worked with them arose to the occasion just as you and I must do in the 1980s, an era that will soon be upon us.

We certainly do not anticipate being involved in a world-scale emergency. But, if one develops we must be ready—and able.

We can anticipate continuing change, for example the addition of three oilers, the Kawishiwi, Truckee and Ponchatoula in 1979 and 1980—assignments that will give us all six Neosho class oilers. In addition, MSC will operate a new class of oiler to be built by the Navy beginning in Mid-1983. The oilers will go into service in late 1986 and early 1987.

Overall our fleet support force may double during the 1980s, with a new ammunition ship being added in 1981 and all seven of the Powhatan class tugs by the end of 1981. In 1983 we should accept delivery of a newly constructed cable layer.

We also are extending the life of older ships by overhaul and modification. Neptune and Myer for example, are being converted from steam to diesel electric propulsion systems. Alatna and Chattahoochee are being reactivated and also converted to diesel.

Justification for that trend is lower cost of operations and greater reliability, and both could well be termed the watchwords for the energy-short era of the 1980s, our immediate future.

No matter what it brings, the future will be demanding. We have 30 years of history to illustrate that point. But, we are confident we will be able to meet and master all challenges and we have 30 years of MSC achievement that justify our confidence.

COVER: MSC celebrates its 30th anniversary this month. Much of the command history is reviewed in this issue. The cover design is by Art Mullins and the birthday cake by Carmen Mullins.

Sealift

MAGAZINE OF THE MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

Vol. XXIX No. 10 Washington, D.C. October 1979

Beginning

Military Sealift Command was a youngster when it was called on to create a bridge of ships to support U.N. troops in Korea.

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Space Age

The 1960s were turbulent years as wars and national tragedies occupied MSC ships worldwide. The command also entered the space age.

page 14

Challenges

The command met many tests and challenges in the 1970s. Fleet support was added to its missions and Vietnamese refugees fled to safety in MSC ships.

page 20

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 3, 1979

For thirty years the men and women who have been a part of the Navy's Military Sealift Command have operated ships transporting troops, equipment and supplies to points around the world. They have loyally carried out U.S. foreign policies and enabled our nation to meet its obligations to its allies.

MSC ships, crews and professional shore establishment personnel have also supported our space flight program, helped maintain the communications cables that link the continents, been involved in many research and scientific explorations and lifted hundreds of thousands of refugees to new lands where they could escape repression and start a new life of freedom and opportunity for themselves and their descendants.

On this historic milestone, I am proud to salute the members of the Military Sealift Command and to express my appreciation for your significant contributions to the strength and mobility of our Armed Forces and the security of our nation. I wish you every future success in your essential work.

Jimmy Carter

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

4 October 1979

Rear Admiral Bruce Keener, III, USN
Commander, Military Sealift Command
Department of the Navy
Washington, D.C. 20390

Dear Admiral Keener:

On behalf of the entire Navy-Marine Corps Team I extend best wishes and congratulations to all members of the Military Sealift Command as you observe your thirtieth anniversary.

MSC has been involved in many significant events during the past thirty years, among them the Berlin Airlift, the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of refugees from both Europe and the Far East, and logistical support of the United Nations' conflict in Korea and the war in Southeast Asia.

MSC ships and crews have delivered cargo for our military forces worldwide, have supplied federal sites in both the Arctic and Antarctic, have supported space flight programs, and have helped explore the oceans.

In recent years, MSC has taken on a new and major role, direct support of the Navy fleet. MSC's civilian manned support ships help assure Navy fleet mobility and their impact on cost and productivity has been vitally important to Navy efforts to strengthen both overall capability and the management of its assets.

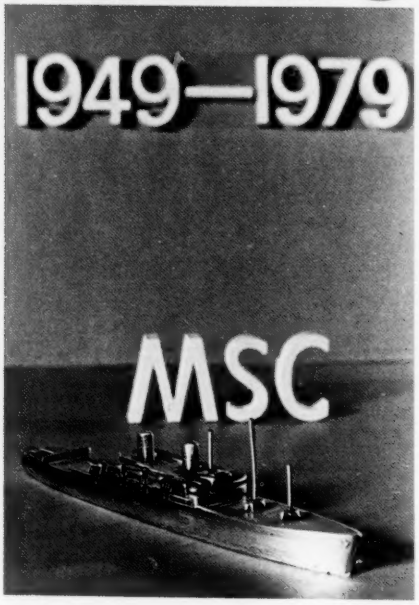
As the direct Navy link with the U.S. maritime industry, and as a Navy organization which helps assure the mobility of our sister services, MSC bears a great responsibility. Your teammates are proud of your many accomplishments and confident that the future holds even greater success.

Sincerely,

James Woolsey

R. James Woolsey
Acting Secretary of the Navy

BORN OF MANY PARENTS



The Military Sealift Command, which celebrates its 30th anniversary October 1 as the Navy operating agency charged with providing sea transportation for the Department of Defense and other government agencies, was born of many parents.

Throughout World War II, four organizations controlled cargo delivery—the Army Transport Service, Naval Transportation Service, the War Shipping Administration and the Fleet Service Forces.

The Army and Navy each operated their own shipping services during the war. If that sounds unusual, it might be noted that the first armed ship of George Washington's fleet, the schooner, Hannah, was commanded by Army Capt. Nicholson Broughton.

Indeed one of the great privateer skippers of the Revolutionary War was Army Col. Silas Talbot. His exploits were so impressive the Continental Congress commissioned him a captain in the fledgling Navy.

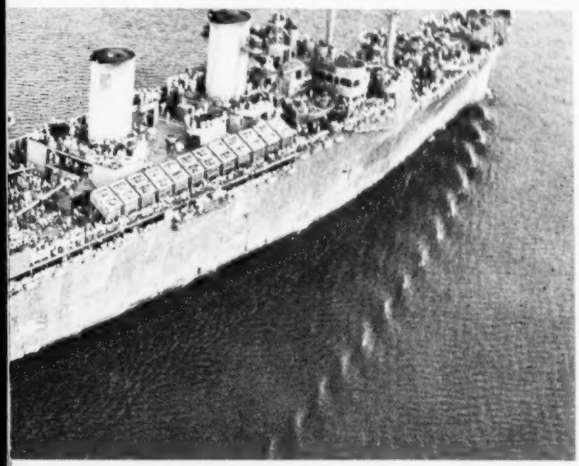
It was determined after World War II, however, that there should be a single manager for all Department of Defense ocean transportation.

On Aug. 2, 1949, Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson issued a directive making the Secretary of the Navy the single manager for sealift and directing him to establish an operating agency within the Navy.

And on Oct. 1, 1949, a sealift command officially began operating with Vice Adm. William M. Callaghan its first commander.

The organization was known as the Military Sea Transportation Service, the name it held until August 1970 when it was renamed Military Sealift Command. MG ⚓

A convoy of merchant ships loaded with war materials head across the Atlantic. Many of the merchant seamen sailing the ships for the Army and Navy transferred to MSC in the 1950s.



Army troops crowd the decks of the Navy troopship Adm. C. F. Hughes in June 1945. The troops were redeployed from France to Pacific islands. The Hughes was transferred from the Naval Transportation Service to MSC in March 1950 and renamed Adm. Edwin D. Patrick. The ship now is in the National Defense Reserve Fleet at Suisun Bay, Calif.

Liberty ships, many of which were turned over to MSC after World War II, are unloaded at a Mediterranean port during the war. The John S. Pillsbury is at right.

1950s

Barely had MSC come into its own when hostilities erupted in Korea on June 5, 1950.

The command already had received 92 ships from the Navy, but 115 Army ships were in the process of being transferred when the conflict began.

By July 1, MSC had an additional six ships on charter from private companies and the Maritime Administration had been asked to remove 130 more vessels from mothballs to be turned over to commercial firms that would operate them for MSC under government contract.

Purpose was to create a bridge of ships spanning the Pacific from the United States to Korea, to support United Nations troops deployed to Korea.

The mission was achieved. Statistics indicate that 87 per cent of United Nations fighting forces and equipment were moved to Korea by sea. This figure represents 3.5 million passengers and 98.1 million measurement tons of cargo.

At the height of the Korean War, MSC had a fleet of 467 ships that operated around the world from Taiwan to Turkey. They carried United Nations troops from their homelands to battle; they evacuated the wounded and the refugees; they provided everything from butter, to black oil, to helicopters and military hardware needed at the battlefront.

In December 1950, MSC ships evacuated 105,000 soldiers, 91,000 civilians, 17,500 vehicles and 350,000 tons of supplies from Hungnam, Korea only hours ahead of an advancing enemy.

And at Inchon, MSC ships were involved in the amphibious landings of U.N. troops as their crews worked around the clock unloading supplies.

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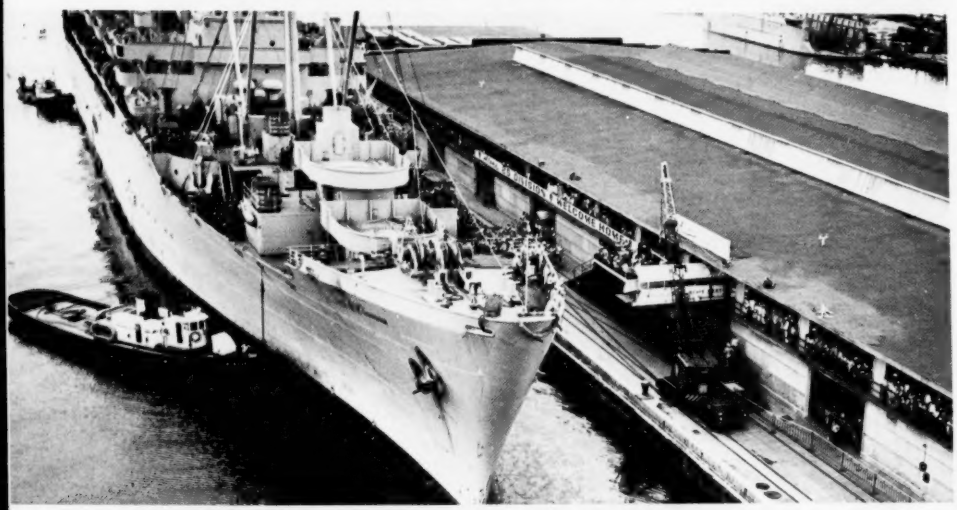
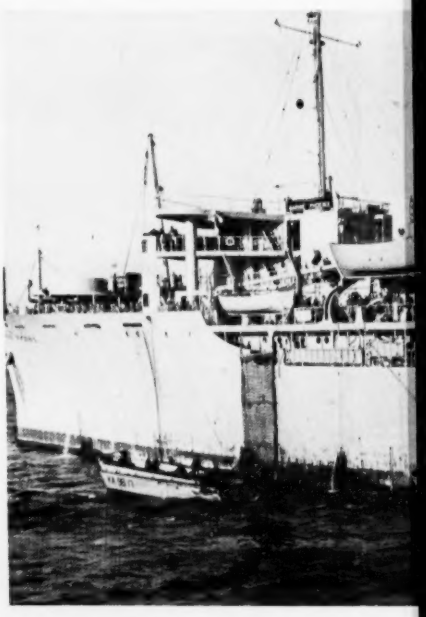
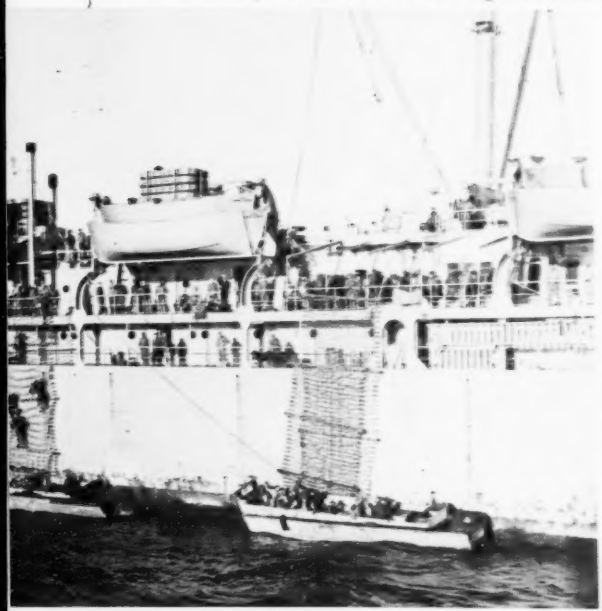




Hawaii welcomes the first large contingent of 25th Division troops. The USNS Gen. W. H. Gordon arrived in Honolulu with 3,700 officers and men in 1954. The "Aloha Welcome" included an aerial flyover by jets, a shower of 25,000 orchids from a helicopter and hula dancers at the pier.

A mine is blown in up Wonsan Harbor during the invasion.



U.S. Marines climb down nets into landing craft from USNS Marine Phoenix at Wonsan Harbor in 1950.

Korean War troops aboard the USNS Marine Phoenix arrive at Seattle.

1950s

Continued

Some 3,000 American prisoners of war in Korea returned to the U.S. aboard MSC ships in June 1954.

In other operations of the 1950s, MSC ships supplied U.S. bases on the west coast of Alaska and together with the U.S. Coast Guard and the Canadian Navy navigated and charted the Northwest Passage for the first time.

MSC ships also resupplied sealing stations operated by the Department of Interior on Pribiloff Island and brought petroleum products to the Distant Early Warning line construction sites between Cape Lizburne and Baffin Island in Northeast Canada.

And from MSC's Gulf subarea headquarters, flour, grain and fertilizer were shipped to Marshall Plan countries in Europe in 1950 while foodstuff was delivered monthly to Japan, Korea, Germany, Egypt, Libya and Italy.

Throughout the 50s MSC ships were involved in helping the nations of the world—from Europe and the Far East—to ports of the Indian subcontinent, the Mediterranean and Red Sea, the Arab Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

And the command also shipped supplies to scientists involved in multinational research in Antarctica as part of the well-known Operation Deep Freeze.

Indeed, in 1958 the MSC charter was expanded to include operation of scientific support ships, vessels that would be involved in oceanographic research, missile tracking, communications and other unusual missions.

When Italy gave America the four famous bronze horse statues that may be seen at Memorial Bridge in Washington, D.C., it was an MSC ship that transported the works of art to the United States.

USNS Greenville Victory is unloaded in the Antarctic during Operation Deep Freeze in 1957. In 1975 it helped evacuate Vietnamese refugees.

In war and in peace, in times of scientific exploration or in periods of distress, MSC vessels were operating around the world in the 1950s serving this nation and its allies.

Civilian refugees, a tragedy in all wars, were evacuated by MSC ships wherever trouble erupted in the world of the 1950s.

In October 1951, the USNS Rose brought 2,500 aliens from Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Poland,

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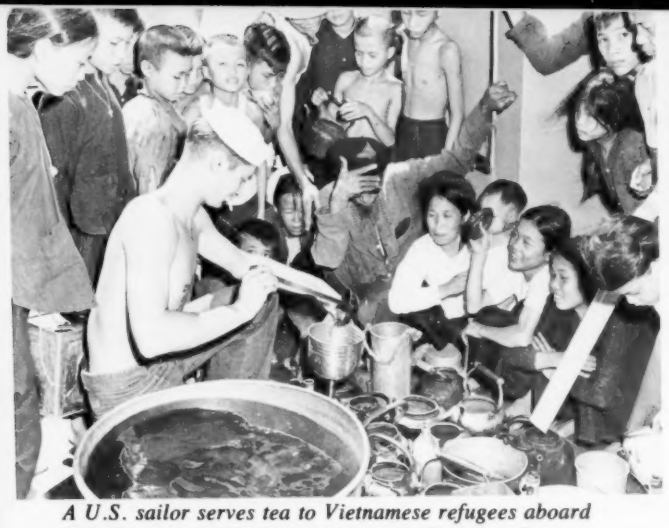


A U.S. sailor serves tea to Vietnamese refugees aboard USS Bayfield in 1954. Approximately 50,000 refugees were evacuated by Navy combat ships and MSC vessels from Communist-held Haiphong to Saigon during the Passage to Freedom.

North Vietnamese refugees who fled communism in 1954 aboard MSC ships are shown in Saigon.

Marines land near Beirut, Lebanon in an operation that brought peace to that troubled country in 1958. MSC was involved.

1950s

Continued

Romania and Russia to join the U.S. Army in New York.

And in a foreboding forecast of things to come, the MSC operated aircraft transporter, the Windham Bay, first large ship to navigate the Long Tam River since 1925, tied up in Saigon, French Indochina in February 1951. During its stay, 17 hand grenades were tossed at the ship by terrorists.

From 1954 to 1955, USNS vessels sealifted some 300,000 refugees fleeing from North Vietnam to South Vietnam, a tragedy doomed to repeat itself in 1975.

Again, in 1956, following the heroic Hungarian uprising, MSC sealifted 21,500 Hungarian refugees to the United States.

Despite wars, near wars and the beginning of future wars, MSC was involved in other missions of mercy and defense during the 1950s.

In February 1951, USNS Morton and Marine Phoenix rescued 24 passengers and crew from the Swedish ship Christer Salen which broke in half during a typhoon north of Tokyo Bay.

Two years later, at the other end of the world, the USNS Muir rescued 118 passengers and crew from the Italian ship Tripolitania sinking off the coast of Sicily.

And in four separate incidents in 1953, MSC owned or operated ships were involved in the rescue of 172 persons from sinking ships on the high seas.

In one of the worst sea tragedies of modern times, the sinking of the Andrea Doria following a collision with the Swedish ship Stockholm, the USNS Thomas was credited with rescuing 159 survivors.

MSC ships also continued routine sealift operations during the 1950s. The 4th U.S. Infantry Division sailed to Europe to join NATO forces in May 1951 aboard three MSC ships. MG ⚓

The USNS Wacissa is partly high and dry. The small tanker was caught in an Arctic tidal change after dropping anchor in a supposedly safe anchorage. It was refloated the next day with little damage.

USNS Harris County was used in 1958 to transport overage ammunition to sea for disposal. Here the ship is awaiting ammo from West Camp at Whittier, Alaska.

USNS Towle, assisted by Coast Guard icebreakers, plows through McMurdo Sound ice in support of Deep Freeze.

1960s

MSC entered the space age in the 1960s even as wars and other national tragedies continued to occupy its ships around the world.

The nose cone of the first missile fired into space was recovered in August 1960 by the USNS Haiti Victory, now the USNS Longview. In July 1963, Astronaut Gordon Cooper's 22-orbit space flight was monitored by the USNS Range

Tracker's stellar inertial navigation system.

A month later USNS Kingsport, the world's first satellite communication ship, relayed the initial live broadcast via Syncom (one of the first synchronous satellites launched) of a telephone conversation between Prime Minister Balawa in Nigeria and President John Kennedy in Washington.

Earlier, in July 1961, USNS Eltanin, operated by MSC for the National Science Foundation, became the world's first Antarctic research ship.

The decade ended on an optimistic note scientifically when the MSC "Moonship Fleet," USNS Vanguard, Redstone, Mercury and Huntsville, supported the successful

Continued

In June 1965 a security force of 500 men protected the USNS Core (left) as it was sailed up the Saigon River to discharge 70 planes in Saigon. Grenades were tossed into the river to detonate mines and barbed wire protected the berthing area. As planes were unloaded (above) port streets were cleared. That night streets leading out of the port into Saigon were emptied as the planes were taken to Son Nhut airport. Reason for the tight security–a year earlier the USNS Card was sunk by a mine at the same berth.

In the morning haze USNS Patch (right) awaits repairs at Bremerhaven in 1962. Four years later Patch and USNS Darby completed the longest passenger lift in military history carrying troops 12,500 miles from Boston to Vietnam.

1960s

Continued

Apollo 11 flight to the moon. MSC had lent its sea legs to the American astronauts who made "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

MSC ships and their crews were involved in major national tragedies during the 1960s, beginning in August 1963 when USNS Mizar located and photographed the sunken submarine USS Thresher.

In April 1966, Mizar was involved in another successful needle-in-the-haystack hunt. Searchers aboard the ship located an H-bomb lost in the ocean after two jets collided in the Mediterranean Sea near Palomares, Spain.

USNS Marine Fiddler was involved in an unusual mission in September 1968. Together with USNS Towle it hauled hundreds of thousands of gallons of contaminated water for burial in Charleston, S.C. The water had been contaminated when a B-52 carrying an atomic bomb crashed while landing in Thule, Greenland.

In October 1968, Mizar located the USS Scorpion, a submarine that had disappeared with all hands. She was found in the Atlantic 400 miles southwest of the Azores, in 10,000 feet of water.

When the miniature research submarine Alvin sunk early in 1969 in 5,000 feet of water off the New England Coast, Mizar was sent to find her. The Mizar crew again accomplished their mission and photographed the Alvin.

MSC ships were involved in national crises and wars whenever and wherever they occurred throughout the 1960s.

In December 1961 and during the first three months of the Berlin buildup, MSC transports sealifted 29,182 troops to Europe.

When the Cuban crisis developed, USNS Upshur was on a routine voyage to Panama via Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. With less than four hours notice, Upshur was diverted to evacuate dependents from Guantanamo. It lifted 1,725 passengers to Norfolk.

Meantime in the Congo, the cargo carrier USNS Blatchford, dubbed the "Ambassador Ship," served the United Nations for 2½ years, returning home in August 1963.

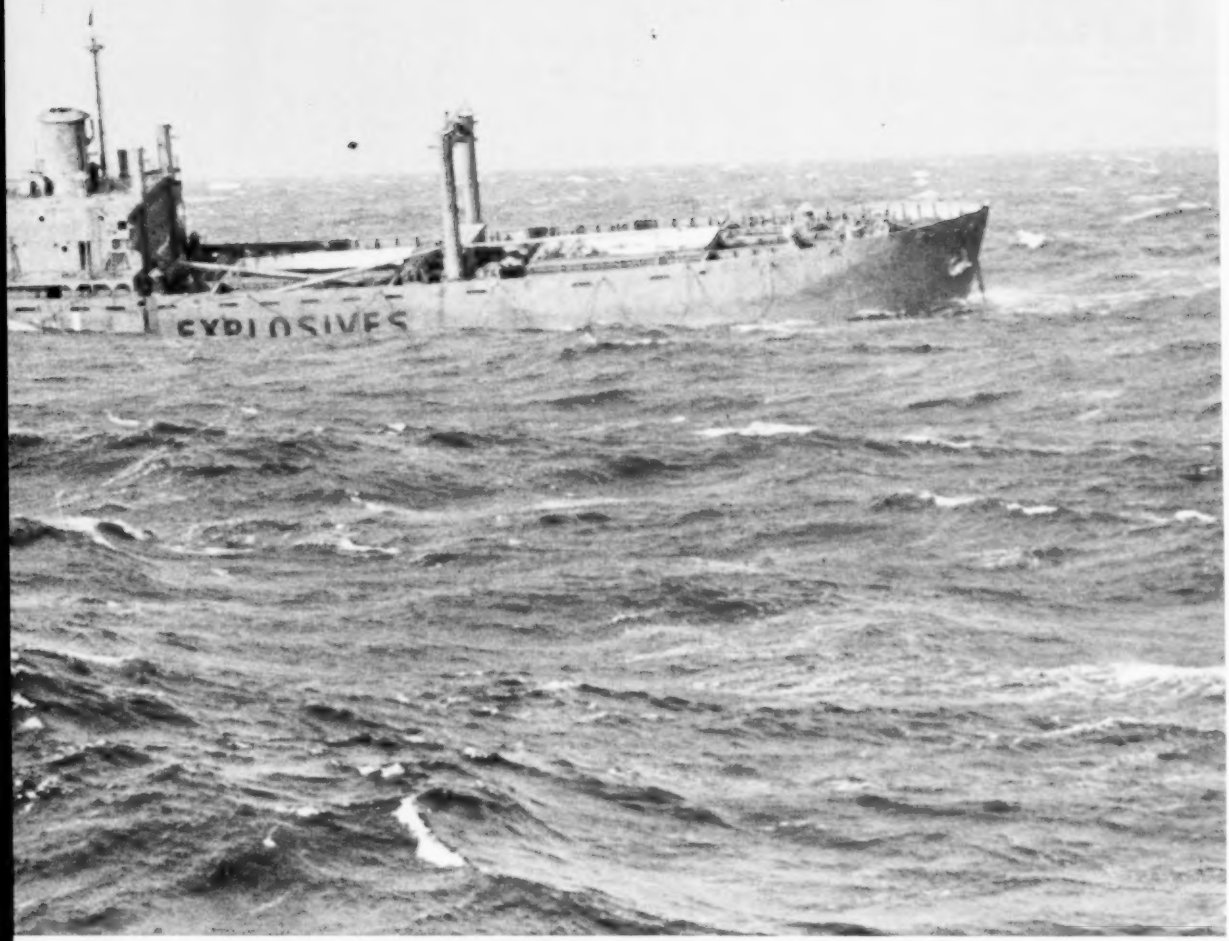
In April 1965, after President Lyndon B. Johnson sent U.S. troops to the Dominican Republic to protect American nationals, USNS Laurentia and the SS Santo Cerra were dispatched there to deliver supplies for the armed forces.

MSC ships, in the best tradition of the sea, were credited with several rescues in the 1960s. In March 1967 the USS Chase County under MSC operational control, rescued 29 fishermen from a grounded Japanese craft on Bombay reef.

In June 1967 the SS St. Augustine, a contractor operated ship taken from the National Defense Reserve Fleet, rescued survivors from the burning SS Winsome. In November 1967, a Canadian Air Force veteran ran into trouble when his 20-foot sloop split its seams as he tried to sail from New York to Capetown, South Africa. He was rescued by the crew of USNS Gibbs.

MSC was involved in far reaching though routine operations between crises but the big story was command support of the war in Vietnam.

Even before the escalation, there



Throughout most of the 1960s, old explosives were taken to sea aboard obsolete ships and sent to the bottom in the Cut Holes And Sink'em (CHASE) program. Here the Liberty ship USNS Cardinal O'Connell has just started to flood and sink in 8,400 feet of water off the Washington coast. Modified to carry aircraft, the O'Connell returned war dead from the Pacific after World War II.

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was an MSC casualty when the USNS Card was mined and sunk on May 1, 1964 while moored in Saigon.

MSC ships first came on the scene in March 1965 when USNS Mann transported an advance element of 2,000 Republic of Korea soldiers from their homes to South Vietnam.

In June, MSC chartered ships sealifted U.S. Coast Guard Squadron One, composed of 17 patrol craft, to the war zone and in August elements of the Army's 1st Cavalry Division sailed to Vietnam aboard USNS Kula Gulf.

One year later, in August 1966, USNS Patch and Darby completed the longest troop lift in U.S. military history carrying American soldiers 12,500 miles—halfway around the world—from Boston to Vietnam.

In October 1966, two vessels, the SS Meredith Victory operated by American President Lines and the converted liberty ship Benjamin Chew operated by U.S. Lines, were added to the MSC fleet in Southeast Asia. The Meredith Victory was awarded the Gallant Ship Award for evacuating 14,000 Korean refugees in a single voyage.

The Vietnam war became personal for MSC towards the end of 1967. In November, SS President Buchanan was considerably damaged by gunfire in the Long Tam River. There were no casualties.

In December 1967, the MSC chartered ship SS Seatrain Texas, anchored at Nha Be near Saigon, was hit by a floating explosive device.

Continued

1960s

Continued

From 1960 until the Vietnam buildup in 1965-66, the MSC fleet averaged 85 ships. At one point the chartered fleet was down to two vessels.

But, during the early 1960s, the U.S. Merchant Marine underwent the greatest change since steam replaced sail. The era of the container ship had begun.

With such ships one gang of longshoremen could load as much cargo in 12 hours as six to eight gangs formerly loaded in a week.

MSC customers, Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force soon developed an "appetite" for container service which helped reduce cargo pilferage, limited damage, and lowered cargo handling time. The box which could be delivered from door to door—from factory and field—was attractive to the military shipper and MSC was a pioneer in use of container ships.

In fact, Malcolm McLean, who was head of Sea-Land when that company developed container ships and supporting systems, reportedly has said that MSC support of the intermodal concept was the dominant factor in its early success.

MSC also was an industry partner in the continued development of the roll-on, roll-off ships in the 1960s. Two are now in the nucleus fleet, another is under long-term charter and there is a possibility that other ro-ros may join the MSC fleet in the 1980s. All of which proves that good ideas only get better.

MSC crewmen met new challenges in the beginning of the 1970s when support of Navy fleets at sea became an MSC mission.

Troop transports went out of service during the 1960s although they were used right up to the end of the decade, shuttling U.N. troops in and out of South Vietnam. One result was the merger of the passenger and cargo divisions at MSC headquarters with most troops now moving by air.

During the years the shooting was going on in Southeast Asia—with Americans involved—the MSC fleet remained relatively stable after the buildup. More than 400 ships were controlled by MSC during much of the latter half of the 1960s.

The problem, after U.S. withdrawal, was to reduce MSC assets to a needed level, a process that was completed over a couple of years. During the war years, MSC delivered nearly 181 million measurement tons of dry cargo and almost 198 million long tons of petroleum products to military customers.

In one year alone, MSC delivered more than 32 million measurement tons of dry cargo in the 1960s and revenue during those war years exceeded $1 billion on several occasions. In four fiscal years, 1965 through 1969, dry cargo carried to Southeast Asia, or moved in theater, totaled 53.7 million tons—and petroleum products accounted for 7.6 million long tons.

What one word describes MSC contributions to U.S armed forces during the war in Southeast Asia? Mobility.

Because of MSC, which moved about 96 per cent of all military ocean cargo, U.S. troops were able to carry out their commitments and to enjoy some of the items that were important, even though not necessities.

As MSC members, past and present, look back at the turbulent 60s, there is reason for them to be proud of what they accomplished. They did their jobs, and a little bit more.

MG ⚓

USNS Merrell is unloaded in the Antarctic

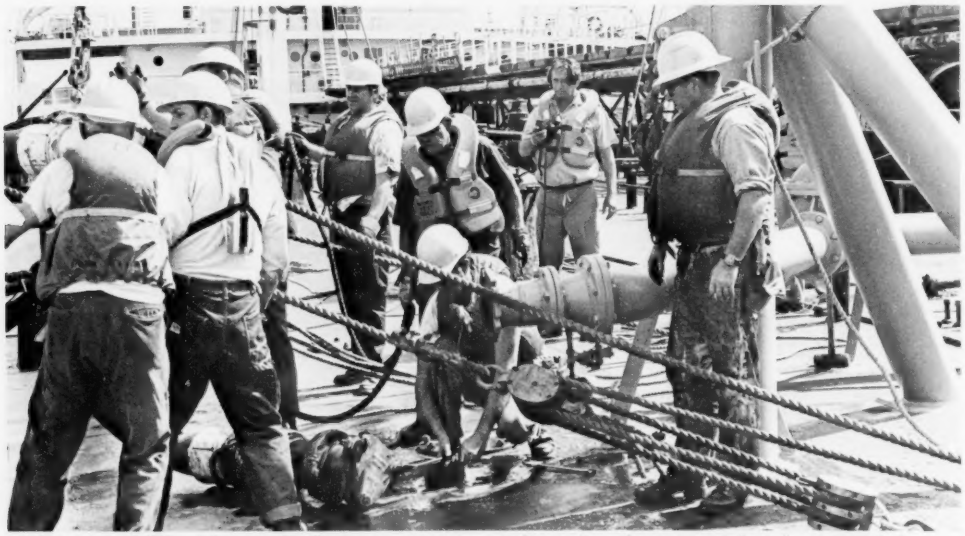
Escorted by ice breakers, USNS Alatna moves past explorer Robert Scott's old hut erected in 1902 at McMurdo Sound.

during annual supply operations.

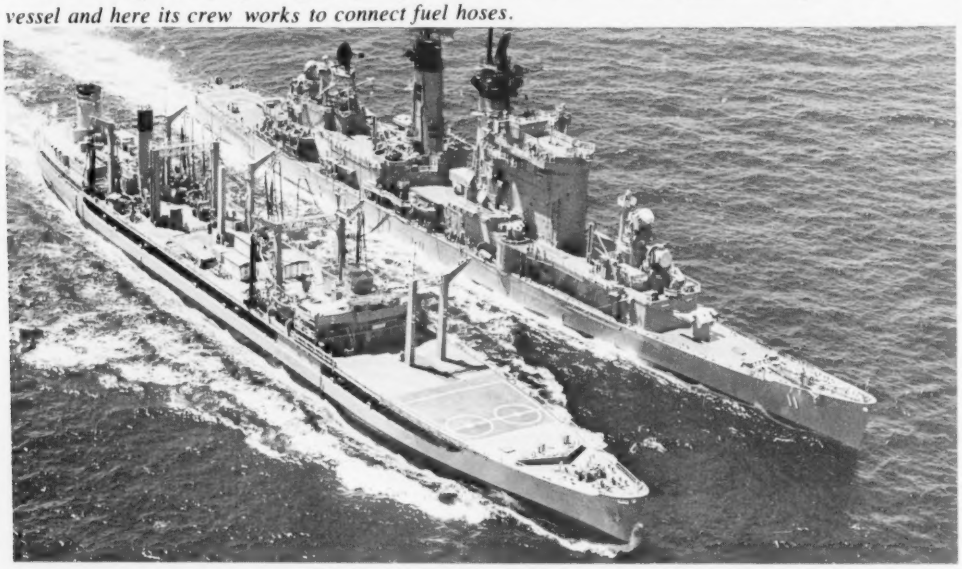
USNS Mizar provided cargo service between Seattle and Alaska ports in 1962–1963. In 1965 searchers aboard Mizar located an H-bomb lost off the Spanish coast.

1970s

Just like the human body, an organization can be afflicted by arteriosclerosis, with the same ultimate end. Organizations suffer from a lack of ideas just as the human body is affected if circulation of blood is curtailed. When people in an organization, an industrial corporation or a military one, react from habit, when they rely on old and previously successful methods of getting their jobs done, when they cease to be innovative and are re-



In the early 1970s, Navy embarked on a program to determine if commercial tankers and their crews were capable of refueling Navy ships at sea. The SS Erna Elizabeth was the first such vessel and here its crew works to connect fuel hoses.



USNS Passumpsic was the second oiler to be turned over to the command. Here it refuels the guided missile cruiser USS Chicago.

luctant to accept new and far ranging responsibilities, the organization they represent has begun to slide down the other side of the hill.

With MSC observing its 30th anniversary as the Department of Defense and Navy sealift operating agency, it is ironic that some have established the 30-year-mark as the dividing point between the dynamicism of youth and soon-to-be sedentary senior citizens.

MSC doesn't fit the organizational seniors category. In fact, as the organization and as its people wind up three decades of worldwide sea transportation operations, emphasis is on a new role—operation of the Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force. MSC is running up hill, not sliding down a peak already reached.

MSC's expanding role in Navy fleet support began with a single step, in the early 1970s, when the command was assigned USNS Taluga. It was manned by a 105-man civilian crew and a small detachment of Navy communications specialists to determine if Civil Service mariners could replenish fleet ships under way.

The results justified expectations of the optimistic and overcame objections of the skeptics. Civilian manning of Navy auxiliaries frees highly trained military men for service on warships. Civilian manned ships cost less to operate

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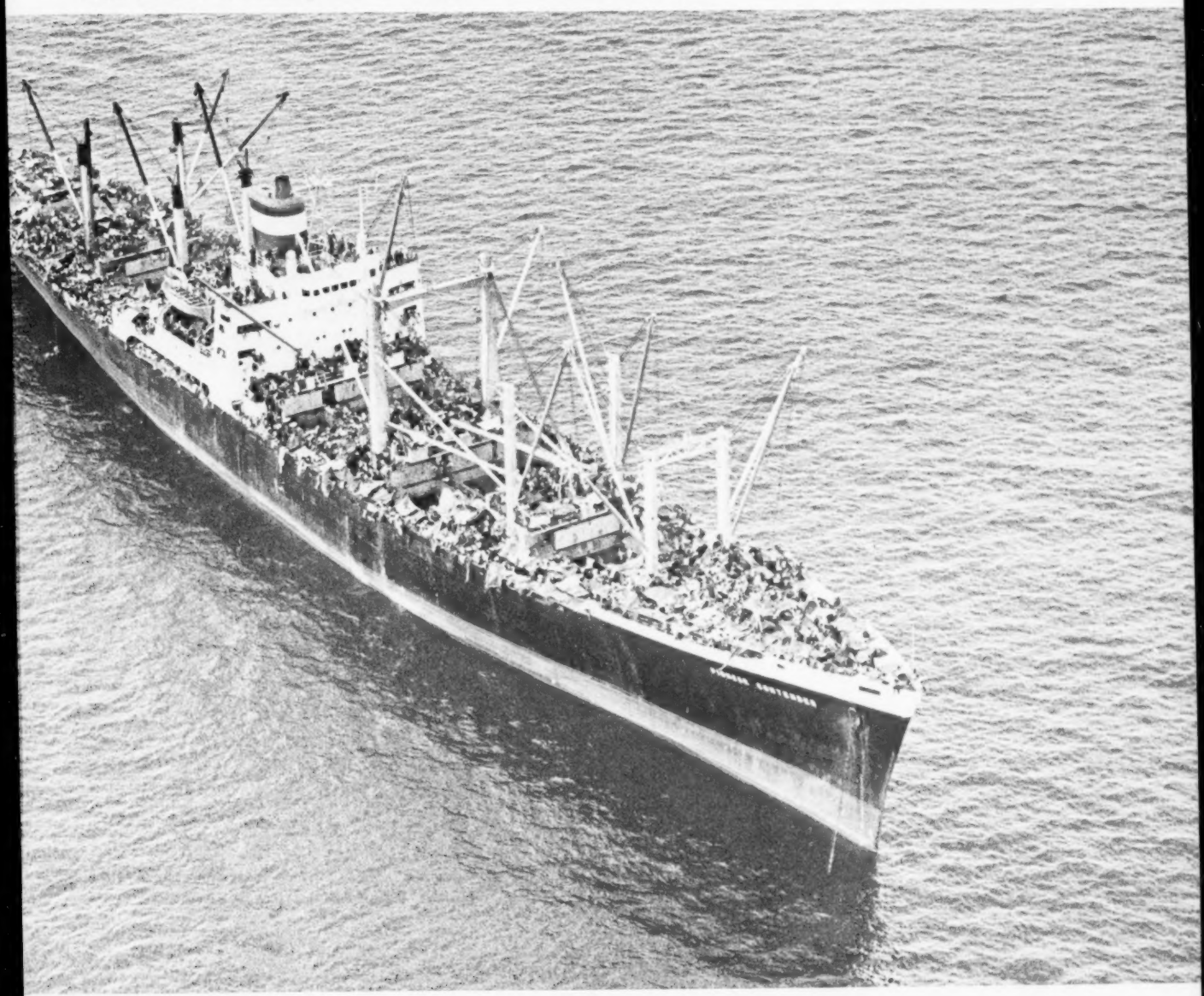


In 1975 command controlled ships evacuated nearly 180,000 South Vietnamese refugees. The Pioneer Contender, shown here in the South China Sea, moved 34,200 refugees.

1970s

Continued

and their reliability and productivity are even higher than expected.

With the end of the 70s just a couple of long holidays away, MSC now mans 22 fleet support ships. They include a stores ship, 10 oilers, 5 fleet tugs, 3 fleet ballistic missile supply ships and 3 cable layers.

It is probable that the Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force may double in the 1980s. Now scheduled for MSC operation by 1981 are an ammunition ship and six more Powhatan class tugs. One already has been received.

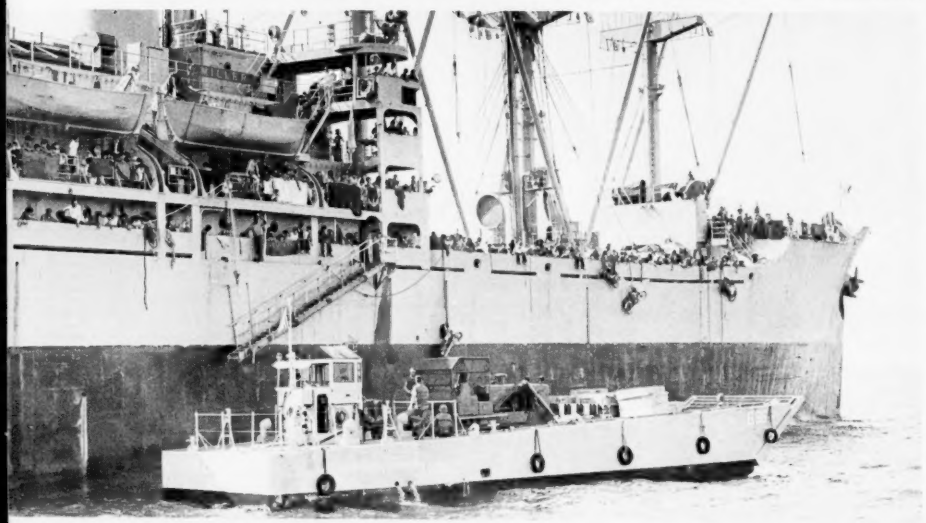
The new tugs, built to commercial standards, will replace older ones the command now operates. Sometime in 1983, MSC Civil Service mariners will be manning a new cable laying ship.

Three new oilers also will be added to MSC rolls, the Kawishiwi, Truckee and Ponchatoula. And MSC will operate a new class of oilers, the T–AO–187, when they are built. (See the message by MSC commander on Page 2 for more information on what the 80s promise).

While the legendary black baseball pitcher Satchel Paige often advised "Don't look back, someone may be gaining on you," a 30th anniversary warrants a quick look over the shoulder. Memories fuel new accomplishments and MSC memories provide a lot of horsepower for the command and its people.

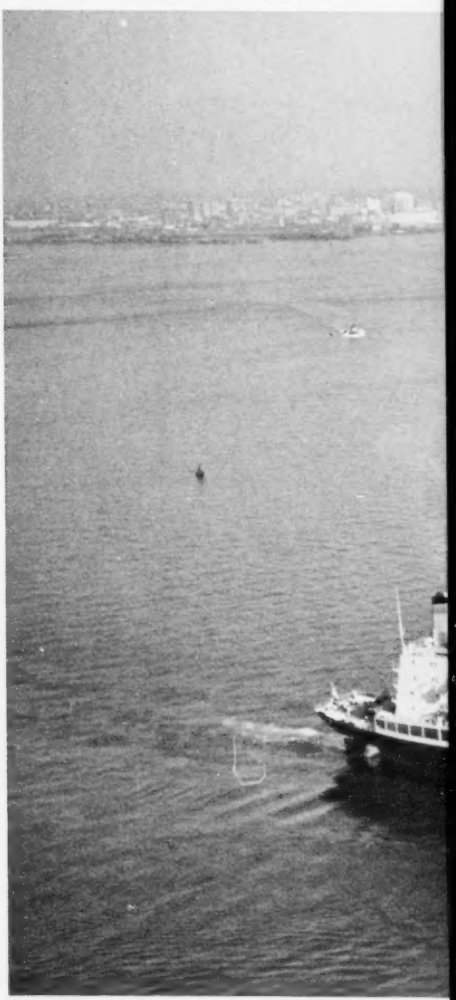
During the Southeast Asia war years, MSC moved about 96 per cent of all supplies and equipment needed by U.S. troops in that area. Altogether MSC controlled ships delivered more than 85 million measurement tons of dry cargo and 16 million long tons of petroleum products.

MSC ships also returned a substantial volume of unneeded equipment to the United States. The headline making feat for MSC, though, was its evacuation of nearly



Motorcycles dangle over the side of the USNS Miller as refugees crowd the decks. A landing craft with supplies is brought alongside.

The first of a new class of oceangoing tug moves through the St. Lawrence Seaway. Powhatan now is supporting the Second Fleet.



180,000 refugees from South Vietnam just before the fall of that country. Refugees fled to safety aboard MSC cargo ships—government owned and chartered. One ship carried nearly 17,000 refugees in a single voyage.

On a ship manned by a 45-man crew, considerable ingenuity was required. And it was displayed as cooks prepared rice in sinks with the aid of steam hoses and conjured up 55-gallon cans full of tuna soup. Babies were born aboard ship and a few older refugees died. Tales of ingenuity, courage, and human compassion were plentiful and literally thousands of free men and women will never forget the Civil Service and union mariners who helped them when their lives were blackest.

Almost at the end of the refugee movement, the SS Mayaguez was seized by Cambodian troops and six MSC mariners volunteered to board the ship with the Marines and help sail it to safety.

Throughout the 70s, in emergencies and in meeting normal requirements for delivery of military cargo, MSC and the maritime industry have strengthened their working relationships.

In the past fiscal year, MSC paid nearly $700 million to private companies for services and supplies. Some $107.4 million was paid to operators of chartered ships and tanker operators received another $122 million. Another $45 million was paid to industry in fiscal 1978 for movement of crude oil for the Department of Energy Strategic Petroleum Reserve Program and a whopping $326 million went to private carriers to move military cargo on scheduled liners. Some $22.3 million went to contractors who operate MSC tankers and another $1.5 million was paid owners of ships chartered by MSC for scientific support missions. Approximately $98 million was expended for nucleus fleet ship repairs and other engineering services. Tug and barge contractors received another $11 million.

MSC tug and barge operations became routine in the 1970s. It began

Continued

Nine new Sealift class tankers were added to the fleet in the 1970s enabling MSC to retire 16 old T-2 tankers.

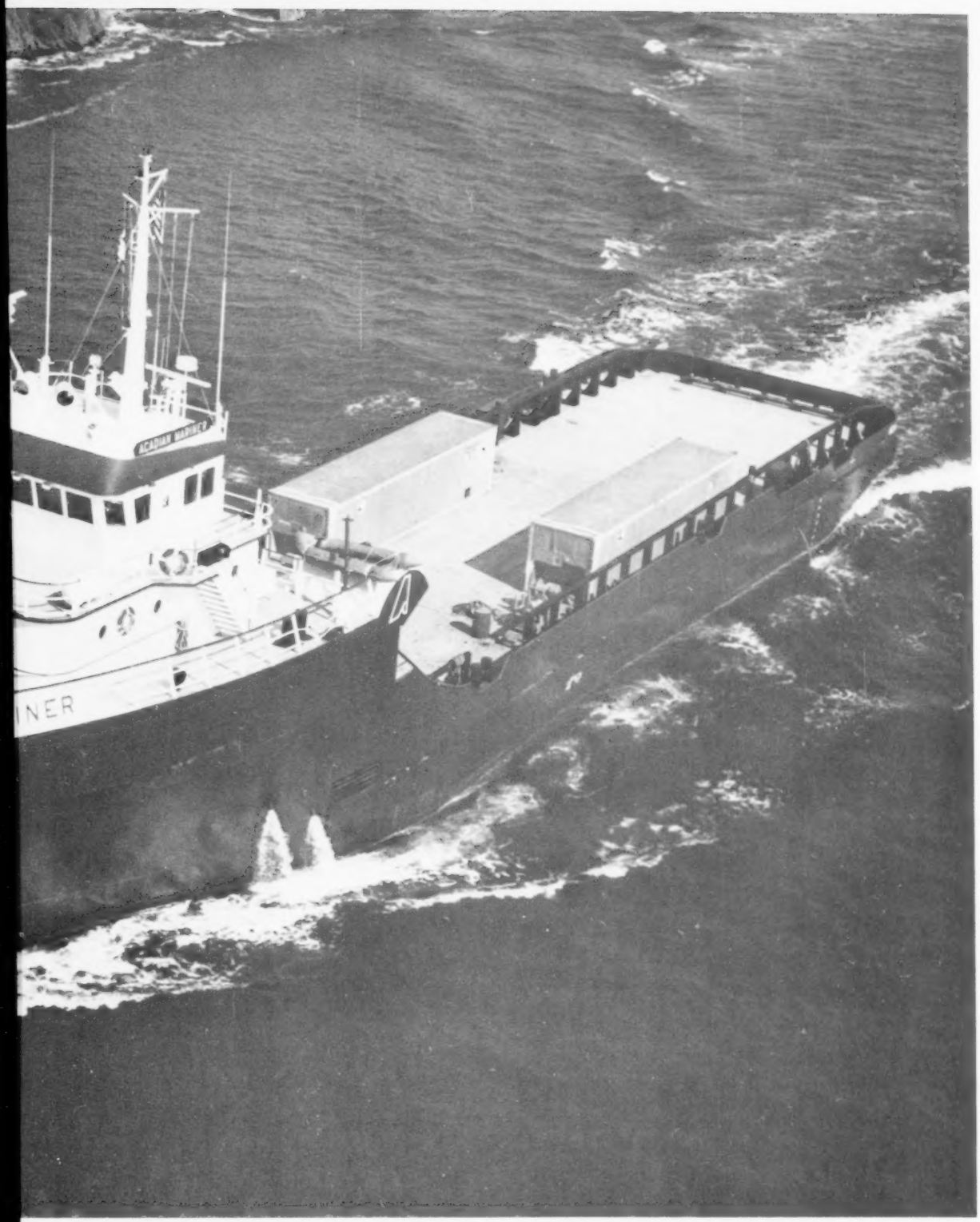
1970s

Continued

in the late 1960s and early 1970s when contractors operated tugs and barges that supported U.S. troops in Southeast Asia. MSC now provides service for military forces via five tug and barge contracts. One contractor supplies federal bases in Alaska—Operation Cool Barge—and another supports the Navy installation at Adak. Tug and barge operations also support the Navy at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba and Air Force and NASA stations down range are supplied by tugs and

Continued

An Army tank is loaded aboard the Washington which was taken out of the reserve fleet for use in Reforger.



The modern Acadian Mariner is an offshore resupply vessel under MSC charter to deliver supplies to Air Force missile tracking bases in the Caribbean.

1970s

Continued

barges operating out of Cape Canaveral, Fla. Two contractors provide that service.

During the 1970s, MSC continued to expand its intermodal service. Intermodal service now is provided from supplier to the military user—over land and sea. MSC negotiates rates with the transportation industry for liner service and offers dedicated service to users who need it.

Typical of intermodal services provided are MSC contracts with Alaska Hydro Train for tug and barge service, with Sea-Land Service for containerized delivery of military cargo and with Tote for roll-on, roll-off ship services with all these systems providing for land and sea transportation in the most northern U.S. state. When cargo moves from East Coast ports to Seattle for tug and barge delivery to Alaska, MSC pays overland line-haul costs as part of the complete intermodal systems it provides.

MSC did its thing—cargo delivery, fleet support and operation of scientific support ships—throughout the 70s as a means of developing maritime muscle for support of deployed U.S. forces in an emergency. Command personnel took part in command post exercises such as Nifty Nugget, a Defense wide test, and Solid Shield, an amphibious exercise involving the Marine Corps. It also lifted combat division equipment to Europe during several

Erna Elizabeth was the test ship in 1972 to use an improved over the stern refueling rig. The hose is connected to the destroyer USS Damato.

Reforger exercises—military mobility tests.

All of which illustrates continued MSC interface with the maritime industry, with military shippers and with federal agencies such as the Maritime Administration, Department of Commerce, Federal Maritime Commission and Coast Guard.

Joint MARAD-MSC efforts in the 70s helped strengthen the National Defense Reserve Fleet and provided ships ready to go within 10 days. They are part of the Ready Reserve Force—an element of the reserve fleet.

But, while emphasis may have seemed to be on operations, on meeting current requirements, MSC also stepped up its planning efforts in 1978 and 1979. One result is the establishment of a new headquarters division for strategic mobility planning with the remainder of the previous planning function incorporated in another division with a primary responsibility for systems development. Both functions will have a lot of attention in the upcoming 80s.

The 70s were indeed a time for change. Most of those who joined the command when it was organized in 1949 have retired. Some have taken their own final voyage. But, the history they wrote remains and provides a solid base for continuing MSC achievement.

Old hands and new, both expect the 1980s will be a time for greater change, although perhaps not as rapid. The intensity of events and actions in the 1970s is evident when one considers that six of the eleven admirals who have commanded MSC were at the helm during part of the 70s.

Thirty years is no doubt a long time for the young men and women now shaping MSC's future. But, it is not as long for those brave enough to disregard Satchel Paige's advice and look back. The only thing really gaining on us, as Satchel probably feared, is our future. Although it unfolds one day at a time, those yet unwritten pages of MSC history seem to be turning over rather fast—and that is what will make the 80s so interesting. LCM ⚓

With advent of containerization in the 1960s it soon became apparent to military planners that it was necessary to develop methods to effectively use them in emergencies. In 1970, Offshore Discharge of Container Ships tests were held to evaluate various methods including helos, to discharge container ships.

President Gerald Ford chats with members of USNS Greenville Victory as they were honored for their role in recapturing the SS Mayaguez in 1975. At right of the President is Mayaguez master Charles Miller. The six MSC mariners boarded the ship with U.S. Marines to get it under way after its recapture. The wheel from the Mayaguez was presented to the President by Captain Miller.

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